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Promotion and protection of the rights of children: promotion and protection of the rights of children

Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras and Mexico: draft resolution

Protecting children from bullying

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 69/158 of 18 December 2014 and 71/176 of 19 December 2016 on protecting children from bullying, all its previous resolutions on the rights of the child and the resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council that are relevant to the protection of children from bullying,

Emphasizing that the Convention on the Rights of the Child[1] constitutes the standard in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child and that States parties to the Convention shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized therein,

Recalling the Convention against Discrimination in Education adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 14 December 1960,[2] which aims to eliminate discrimination and promote the adoption of measures that ensure equality of opportunity and treatment,

Recalling also the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training,[3] and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Declaration of Principles on Tolerance,[4]

Welcoming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its entirety,[5] especially the Goals and targets aimed at ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children, and at building and upgrading education facilities that are child-, disability- and gender-sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all children, and

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.
[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 429, No. 6193.
[3] Resolution 66/137, annex.
[4] See A/51/201, annex, appendix I.
[5] Resolution 70/1.

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underscoring the importance of its implementation for ensuring the enjoyment of the rights of the child,

Recognizing that the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the review by the high-level political forum on sustainable development of Goals 4 and 16, as well as the first global review by the General Assembly of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2019, each present strategic opportunities to reinforce action and accelerate progress towards the prevention and elimination of bullying and of all other forms of violence against children,

Welcoming the submission of information on national implementation efforts gathered in the report of the Secretary-General,[6] and taking note of the report, as well as the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

Recognizing the importance of international, regional and bilateral multi-stakeholder partnerships and initiatives to advance the effective protection and promotion of the rights of the child and the elimination of violence against children, including forms of bullying, and in this regard taking note, inter alia, of the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children and the "High Time to End Violence Against Children" initiative of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children,

Welcoming the organization of expert consultations at the regional level, promoted by Member States, in order to raise awareness of the impact of bullying on the rights of the child and to share experiences and best practices, including the International Symposium on School Violence and Bullying: From Evidence to Action, held in Seoul in January 2017, the session on the theme "Safeguarding the future: online protection of underage users", held during the fourth World Internet Conference in Wuzhen, China, in December 2017, and the Inter-American Consultation of Experts on the Protection of Children from Bullying and Cyberbullying, held in Mexico City in April 2018,

Welcoming also the development of national action plans and the enactment of legislation by several Member States to prevent and respond to school violence and bullying,

Recognizing that bullying, including cyberbullying, can take both direct and indirect forms, from acts of physical and verbal violence and aggression to social exclusion, which can inflict physical, psychological and social harm, and that, although rates differ from country to country, bullying, online or in person has a negative impact on the rights of the child and is among children's main concerns, affecting a high percentage of children and compromising their health, emotional well-being and academic work, and acknowledging the need to prevent and eliminate bullying among children,

Recognizing also the importance of generating appropriate statistical information and data on bullying, disaggregated by income, sex, race, age, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and other relevant variables at the national level,

Concerned about the occurrence of bullying in all parts of the world and the fact that children who are victimized by bullying may be at heightened risk for a wide range of emotional problems, as well as potential long-term effects on the individual's ability to realize his or her own potential,

Concerned also that bullying is associated with long-lasting consequences that continue on into adulthood,

[6] A/73/265.

Noting with concern that children who are marginalized or vulnerable, who face stigmatization, discrimination or exclusion, are disproportionately affected by bullying, both in person and online,

Recognizing that bullying often includes a gender dimension and is associated with gender-based violence and stereotyping that negatively affects both boys and girls,

Noting the risks associated with the use of new information and communications technologies and applications, including increased vulnerability to bullying, while stressing that they can create new ways to enhance education and, inter alia, learn and teach about the rights of the child and can be useful tools to promote children's protection,

Noting also the role that information and communications technologies play in reducing the risk of sexual abuse and exploitation, and other forms of violence, including by empowering children to report such abuses,

Acknowledging the obligations and commitments of States to take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, and, as appropriate, the implementation of educational measures to address behavioural practices that condone such violence,

Acknowledging also that the environments surrounding children can affect their behaviour and the important roles that parents, legal guardians, family members, schools, civil society, communities, State institutions and the media have in securing children's protection from the risks associated with bullying and in preventing all forms of violence against children,

Recognizing that during the first 1,000 days of a child's life the brain develops faster than at any other time and that the parent-child relationship is a significant factor in predicting bullying behaviour, as well as the existing evidence of a link between domestic violence and bullying in schools,

Emphasizing that evidence-based initiatives to strengthen children's life skills and respect for human rights, tolerance, concern for others and the responsibility to foster safety, as well as whole-school and whole-community programmes that fully respect all human rights and help to prevent and address bullying, constitute best practices that should be developed, strengthened and shared through international cooperation,

Acknowledging that children's participation and their contributions need to be at the centre of efforts to prevent and address bullying, and that their views and recommendations are critical to a clear understanding of bullying and its impact and also to effectively address it,

1. *Calls upon* Member States:

(a) To continue to take all appropriate measures to prevent and protect children, including in school, from any form of violence, including forms of bullying, by promptly responding to such acts, and to provide appropriate support to children affected by and involved in bullying;

(b) To continue to promote and invest in education, including as a long-term and lifelong process by which everyone learns tolerance and respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring such respect in all societies;

(c) To develop and implement, as appropriate, measures and restorative practices to repair harm, restore relationships, avoid recidivism, promote the accountability of perpetrators and change aggressive behaviour;

(d) To generate and analyse statistical information and data disaggregated by income, sex, race, age, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and other relevant variables at the national level, and to provide information on disability, with regard to the problem of bullying, as a basis on which to elaborate effective public policies;

(e) To adopt and strengthen, as appropriate, clear and comprehensive measures, including, where required, legislation, that seek to prevent and protect children from bullying and provide for safe and child-sensitive counselling and reporting procedures and safeguards for the rights of affected children;

(f) To strengthen the capacities of schools in early detection and response to prevent and respond to bullying, including cyberbullying, in particular initiatives to mobilize support to prevent and address this phenomenon, and to ensure that children are informed of any existing public policies to secure their protection;

(g) To continue to raise public awareness, involving family members, legal guardians, caregivers, young people, schools, communities, community leaders and the media, as well as civil society organizations, with the participation of children, regarding the protection of children from bullying;

(h) To involve children in the development of initiatives to prevent and address bullying, including available support services and safe, accessible, age- and child-sensitive, confidential and independent counselling and reporting mechanisms, and to inform them of available mental and physical health-care services and procedures in place to support them, where they exist, and encourages Member States to make such support services available;

(i) To continue to share national experiences and best practices for preventing and tackling bullying, including cyberbullying;

2. *Encourages* Member States to continue to share with the Secretary-General, through existing processes and mechanisms, information about any initiatives undertaken at the national or subnational level to prevent and address bullying, including cyberbullying, to promote peaceful social interaction with a view to assessing progress, and to make use of the results achieved;

3. *Also encourages* Member States that have not yet done so, to adopt appropriate measures, such as plans of action on the prevention of and response to bullying, drawing on the experience of Member States, the United Nations, regional organizations, academia and civil society actors and taking into account related recommendations of the entities of the United Nations system, and to implement them effectively and assess progress in children's protection from bullying;

4. *Welcomes* the continued collaboration of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children with human rights bodies and mechanisms, within their respective mandates, including the special procedures mandate holders of the Human Rights Council, in order to support efforts to prevent and address violence against children, including bullying;

5. *Invites* the Secretary-General, to facilitate further international efforts, in collaboration with Member States, to continue to raise awareness of bullying, on the basis of evidence, including through existing initiatives of United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes.